Met Office

Changes to Met Office weather warnings

30 March 2011 - The Met Office has launched improvements to the National Severe Weather Warning Service that will bring clearer, more targeted warnings based on the likely impacts that severe weather can bring.

The new *Alerts* and *Warnings*, issued by the Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service will:

1. Be easier to understand - using clear language, making the information less technical.
2. Be impact based - warnings will be based on the impacts of expected weather conditions in the area likely to be affected.
3. Use consistent language - The use of *Alerts* and *Warnings* is consistent with that used by other organisations such as in SEPA and EA flood warnings.
4. Improve the display of information - using clear, concise and distinct graphics on the Met Office website.

Patricia Boyle, Public Weather Service Manager at the Met Office said: "Severe weather can have differing impacts depending on time and location. For example heavy rain in one part of the country may have a greater impact than in another or severe gales may have a greater impact in autumn than in winter.

"Taking this information into account should lead to fewer weather warnings being issued whilst making them more relevant to the public and emergency services."

Finally, the Met Office will be changing the way warnings are displayed on its website to make it easier to find the information that is relevant to users' particular needs. Users will be able to see at a glance the basic information they are interested in and then, if they wish, drill down to find more detail.

These latest improvements follow an extensive 18 month consultation with local councils, police and fire services as well as the public. It is hoped they will lead to a greater awareness of severe weather and its potential impacts, helping the public to be prepared and take action if necessary.

Nick Baldwin, Chairman of the Public Weather Service Customer Group said: "The Met Office provides extremely accurate short-term forecasts and warnings, and the Met Office's severe weather warnings are highly trusted by the British people.

"Research from the Met Office has shown that during the snow in December last year, 80% of people surveyed said they were aware of the warning and 95% of those found the warning useful."

The improvements will continue to deliver critical, safety of life information to those that need to know it, when they need to know it; keeping the public and emergency services informed of high impact weather so that they can take action to keep safe and well.

Find out more about the new National Severe Weather Warning Service (https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20120403182316mp_/http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/guide/warnings.

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